

congratulations for the decades of dedicated service that he has given to his Nation, his State, his city, and his county.

Mr. Yaroslavsky was first elected to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in 1994 and is in the final year of his fifth term on the Board. He has served as chair of the Board, which is rotated annually among the supervisors, four times. For the past 20 years, he has represented the Third Supervisorial District, where he will be remembered as a devoted public servant who amassed numerous accomplishments and innumerable awards.

Mr. Yaroslavsky represents nearly 2 million residents in his district. His efforts primarily have focused on fiscal, health care, transportation, the environment, veterans affairs, homelessness, and the arts. Prior to representing the Third Supervisorial District, he served on the Los Angeles City Council from 1975 to 1994 to which he was elected and re-elected six times.

As a Los Angeles City councilman, Mr. Yaroslavsky honed his fiscal skills as the respected chair of the Council's Finance Committee, and he also earned a reputation as a politician who was willing to take on issues that others would not, including the highly controversial excessive use of force and intelligence gathering policies of the Los Angeles Police Department. As councilman, he also co-authored two landmark initiatives with his colleague, the late Councilman Marvin Braude: Proposition U (1986) which cut by half the commercial development rights adjacent to residential neighborhoods, and Proposition O (1988) which repealed a drilling permit previously issued to the Occidental Petroleum Company.

Most notably, a few of his major accomplishments as supervisor include authoring the 1996 Proposition 'A' park bond that resulted in the preservation of rural open space and the development of urban parks throughout the county. He also authored the 2002 Proposition 'B' trauma tax, approved by over 73 percent of county voters, which is largely credited with stabilizing the county's health care finances.

Mr. Yaroslavsky was the driving force behind the Orange Line busway across the San Fernando Valley which opened in 2005 to record ridership (22,000 daily boardings). He led the effort to rebuild and modernize the world famous Hollywood Bowl amphitheater which re-opened in 2004, and he was instrumental in the development of Walt Disney Concert Hall, the home of the L.A. Philharmonic Orchestra, which opened in 2003. He has also helped fund major investments in the L.A. County Museum of Art and the County's Museum of Natural History. He is regarded as the county's fiscal watchdog, insisting that it live within its means.

Since 1991, Mr. Yaroslavsky has also been associated with the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, NDI, a non-governmental organization headquartered in Washington,

DC, that promotes the development of democratic institutions in burgeoning democracies. He has monitored three international elections for NDI: Romania (1990), Mexico (2000), and Ukraine (2004). He also has conducted seminars on democratic institution-building in Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

While these are just some of Zev Yaroslavsky's significant accomplishments, on behalf of the U.S. Senate and the State of California, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for his inestimable contributions throughout his renowned career. With sincere best wishes, we congratulate Mr. Yaroslavsky upon his retirement from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. We are pleased to join his many co-workers, family, friends, and associates in wishing him health, happiness, and continued good fortune in his future endeavors.●

ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH AGING SERVICES

● Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to recognize an important meeting taking place in Jacksonville, FL. The Association of Jewish Aging Services—AJAS—is holding its 54th annual conference this week.

The theme of this year's conference is "Bringing the Future Home." AJAS has set itself apart as the central address for Jewish eldercare. This theme reflects AJAS's commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of seniors and emphasizes the importance of keeping seniors in their homes. It also indicates the growing importance of continuing to plan for the future and demonstrate the value of and necessity for providing resources for Jewish aging services.

As chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, I am well aware of the need to make sure our long-term care system is meeting the needs of our aging population. As our Nation's seniors continue to age in to the need for greater supports and services, we must evolve to meet the cultural, social, and physical needs of Jewish seniors. In fact, we have shined a spotlight on this issue in the Aging Committee.

Conversations such as those at AJAS's conference this week are evermore critical to ensure that as a Nation we continue to innovate and adapt our existing system to meet the demands of America's seniors.●

REMEMBERING JOAB L. THOMAS

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate and celebrate the life and contributions of Dr. Joab Langston Thomas of Tuscaloosa, AL, who served as chief executive officer of three of the country's well established public universities, including the University of Alabama, Pennsylvania State University, and North Carolina State University. We too often fail to appreciate the contributions our university leaders make to our State's and Nation's

progress. We often think of these leaders as people unconnected to our States and constituents. But as I have known our university leaders in Alabama, such is not the case. They are men and women of stability, common sense, and management skills. Dr. Thomas was no exception.

Dr. Thomas was a native of the wonderful small Alabama town of Russellville. His integrity, work ethic, and native ability were outstanding, and he translated those qualities into three degrees in biological science from Harvard University, where he was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi academic honor societies. In 1961, he became a member of the biology faculty at the University of Alabama.

In 1981, Dr. Thomas became the president of the University of Alabama. Dr. Thomas is credited with tripling UA's research funding, leading a major fundraising campaign, raising admission and curriculum standards, building economic development initiatives that saved local jobs and improving relations with the State legislature, resulting in increased State funding for the university. He also established a university-wide honors program and initiated the highly successful Presidential Scholars program to help recruit top students to University of Alabama.

In the words of University of Alabama's current chancellor, Robert Witt, "From his days as a teaching fellow at Harvard to his tenure at the helm of three of America's premier public universities, Joab Thomas was at the forefront as a leader in higher education. His research focus and emphasis on excellence inspired all of us who were fortunate to follow in his footsteps."

Dr. Thomas was an outstanding university president and was held in the highest esteem and affection by the many people he served so ably. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. Thomas for his dedication and many contributions to public universities.●

TRIBUTE TO EDITH MILDRED TAYLOR

● Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to recognize the 102nd birthday of an incredible Virginian, Edith Mildred Taylor. Edith was born on April Fools' Day in 1912, which could help explain her lifelong good nature and reputation for well-executed pranks, including once wrapping a live mouse as a birthday gift for her teenaged sister.

Edith was born on a farm in Culpeper and has lived there for all of her 102 years. As a young widow, she raised Sarah Ellen Taylor while working at the Culpeper Baptist Nursing Home, caring for seniors and undoubtedly brightening the days of many. After many decades of service to Virginia seniors, she retired to care for her 90-year-old father, who also lived into his 100th year.